
JAPAN MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Afternoon Alert - Thursday, November 17, 2016

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NTV, TBS, and Fuji TV gave top play to reports that PM Abe left Haneda for New York this morning for a meeting with President-elect Trump. NHK led with a report that South Korean President Park's lawyer will make an announcement this afternoon on whether the president will be questioned by prosecutors. TV Asahi led with a report that the Okinawa branch of the Naha District Court ordered the government to pay 2.458 billion yen in damages for aircraft noise related to the Futenma base but rejected the plaintiffs' demand for a suspension of flights at the base.



INTERNATIONAL

U.S. expert stresses significance of Abe-Trump meeting

NTV reported at noon that Michael Auslin, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, welcomed the upcoming meeting between Prime Minister Abe and

President-elect Trump in an interview with the network on Tuesday. He was quoted as saying: "Prime Minister Abe called him right away to say 'I want to fly specially to meet you.' I think it is a good sign because Mr. Trump is a businessman. He thinks about personal relationships in order to get business done. I think what he'll find is that Mr. Abe is an extremely willing partner." Concerning Trump's call on Japan to increase its share of the cost for stationing U.S. forces, Auslin said: "Prime Minister Abe will stress the degree to which Japan already pays for U.S. troops--70%. I think Prime Minister Abe has a good opportunity to drive the agenda because Mr. Trump hasn't really thought that much about Asia." Auslin also reportedly pointed out that there is no need for Japan to panic because the fact that Trump agreed to immediately meet with the premier proves he attaches importance to the alliance. An NTV reporter said since Trump's foreign policy has yet to be developed, the upcoming meeting will be the key to reaffirming the importance of the U.S.-Japan relationship at an early stage.

PM's advisor Kawai meets with members of Trump's transition team

All networks reported that PM Abe's advisor Kawai met with Rep. Devin Nunes, the co-chair of the U.S.-Japan Caucus and a member of Trump's transition team, on Wednesday in Washington. According to TV Asahi, Nunes reportedly told Kawai that the fact that President-elect Trump is taking the time to meet with the prime minister shows his commitment to the relationship. Nunes also reportedly said the President-elect will probably show great interest in various issues in Asia. Kawai was quoted as telling reporters after the meeting: "I asked him to tell the President-elect and his aides that we want the upcoming meeting to be a step toward building a relationship of personal trust." The network also said a DOS spokesperson disclosed that the Trump transition team has not reached out to the State Department regarding the upcoming meeting.

PM Abe leaves for New York

All networks reported at noon that Prime Minister Abe left Haneda for New York this morning, quoting the premier as telling reporters prior to his departure: "It is a great honor for me to meet with President-elect Trump ahead of other world leaders. I hope to talk with President-elect Trump about our dreams for the future." According to TBS, PM Abe and President-elect Trump are expected to meet at the Trump Tower. The network said it is rare for a Japanese prime minister to meet with a President-elect immediately after an election, adding that Abe is hoping to swiftly build a relationship of trust with Trump and exchange views on free trade and security issues. Abe is reportedly arranging meetings with President Obama and Russian President Putin in Lima, Peru.

Abe diplomacy to face paramount challenges

Former Kyodo News managing editor Kenji Goto said on TV-Asahi's "Hodo Station" that PM Abe's diplomatic stewardship will be severely tested in the next few months because of the serious developments that have occurred in the past several weeks in South Korea and other neighboring countries. Japanese officials are deeply concerned that scandal-hit President Park may not be able to visit Japan for the proposed trilateral summit with China and follow through with the bilateral comfort

women agreement. The journalist claimed that Korean politicians who are members of a bilateral parliamentary exchange group have recently proposed the idea of launching a panel to review the pact. Goto noted that the arrest of a Russian economic minister who was involved in bilateral economic cooperation talks and the election of Donald Trump have also interfered with Abe's diplomatic goal of achieving a breakthrough in the Northern Territories talks with Moscow while affirming close political and economic coordination with President Obama's successor.

- [Japan, Russia mulling joint development of 4 islands as symbol of bilateral cooperation](#) (Hokkaido Shimbun Online)
- [Russian FM Lavrov proposes new Asia-Pacific free trade system](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Interview: Trump won't pull US forces out of Japan, says former PM adviser](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Survey of newspaper editorials on Trump's victory](#) (Sankei)
- [Editorial: Asia's leaders must convince Donald Trump that free trade and security are vital to the US](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Funds paid out to 23 former comfort women by ROK foundation](#) (Mainichi)
- [Abe heads to Argentina for first state visit by Japanese leader in 57 years](#) (Mainichi)
- [Asylum seekers trapped in limbo as Japan keeps door closed](#) (The Japan Times)

SECURITY

Hawaii governor willing to accept more U.S. troops from Okinawa

Ryukyu Shimpo led with a Kyodo interview with Hawaii Governor Ige on Tuesday, during which he noted that Hawaii is ready to host more U.S. troops from Okinawa if the Trump administration chooses to scale down the U.S. military presence in Japan. He added that the necessary infrastructure must be prepared for Hawaii to host additional personnel on top of the 2,700 service members who will be relocated from Okinawa under the present U.S. force realignment plan.

Okinawa submits requests to central government on NTA return

Ryukyu Shimpo wrote in a front-page article that the Okinawa prefectural government submitted to the Okinawa Defense Bureau on Wednesday a list of 33 requests regarding the planned reversion of a sizable portion of the Northern Training Area in December. The local government is calling for thorough decontamination of the land and removal of dud shells ahead of the return, onsite

inspections of land deemed to be contaminated with toxic chemicals, including dioxin, and an environmental assessment of the planned use of the newly built helipads. The daily said in a separate piece that the prefectural government is concerned that the central government may not heed some of the requests in order to prioritize its goal of realizing the reversion this year.

- [Full text of gov't stance on rush-to-the-rescue operations](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Editorial: GSDF unit must perform new rescue mission while ensuring its safety](#) (The Japan News)
- [Editorial: Caution needed over new GSDF mission abroad](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Court rejects demand for flight suspension at Futenma base in Okinawa](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Learn about sympathy budget at documentary film screening and lecture](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)
- [Anti-base sentiment expression deleted from USMC briefing material](#) (Mainichi)

ECONOMY

- [Abe pitches Japan's bullet trains to Malaysia](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [TPP minister: Policy of including U.S. in TPP remains unchanged](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Editorial: Japan must express resolve to promote free trade in debates on TPP approval](#) (The Japan News)
- [Cartoon: Abe and Trump in NYC](#) (Asahi)
- [Cartoon: Steamrolling the TPP bills](#) (Akahata)
- [Japan's Abe, seeking stimulus, pushes hard on pay hikes](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [LDP embarks on discussions on reviewing spousal tax deduction](#) (Nikkei)
- [Opposition camp hopes to strengthen overtime penalties on employers](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Panel OK's 50% cut in Opdivo price](#) (The Japan News)
- ["TTP trainees are not labor force:" Ministry of Justice](#) (Yomiuri)

- [80% say schedule for recruitment of new college graduates is “worse” than that used two years ago, Keidanren survey](#) (Mainichi)
- [Japan estimates foreign tourists to reach around 24 mil. by year-end](#) (Kyodo News)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister’s schedule on November 16](#) (Nikkei)
- [Strength of political groups in Diet](#) (Mainichi)
- [Main views of eight political parties/groups on constitutional amendment](#) (Nikkei)
- [DP’s Renho says coalition government proposal “JCP’s one-sided idea”](#) (Yomiuri)
- [DP and JCP join forces in blocking discussions on constitutional reform](#) (Yomiuri)

SCIENCE

- [Japan to expand R&D tax break to service sector](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

SOCIETY

- [Film on American POW hibakusha screened for first time in Hiroshima](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

TV PROGRAMS

South Korean President Park

NHK's "Close-up Gendai Plus" looked closely into the influence peddling scandal involving South Korean President Park, saying that the relationship between the family of Choi Soon-sil and President Park started right after the death of the president's mother. The program said there is speculation that Choi may have influenced the president's speeches. The program said public support for President Park has plunged to 5%, partly because elderly people, solid supporters of the president until now, have chosen not to support her anymore because they feel she "betrayed" them. An expert said that although there is no doubt that President Park's influence will be weakened, it is important that she implements the agreements made with the U.S. and Japan.

